



THE VIDEO GAME GENERATIONS NEWSLETTER

Threads, BlueSky, X/Twitter: [@vggenerations](#)
Archive: <https://www.vggpodcast.com/news>
Subscribe for Free: <https://vggn.eo.page/sub>
Email Feedback To: news@vggpodcast.com

Issue #19 – September 13, 2025

Start Menu

Loading Screen	1
Recent Events.....	2
Point and Click and Think and Solve	3
Point and Click - Continued.....	4
Adventures on a Cartridge	5
DOS and Windows Classics	7
Trilogies and Beyond	10
Modern Miscellaneous.....	11
An Overwhelming Backlog.....	15
Mini-Rev: The Journey Down - Chapter 2	18
Mini-Rev: The Journey Down - Chapter 3	19
Mini-Review: Lost Horizon 2	20
Mini-Review: Twelve Minutes	21
Mini-Review: Tardy	22
Mini-Review: Milkmaid of the Milky Way	23
Mini-Review: Embracelet	24
Mini-Review: Her Majesty's SPIFFING	25
Mini-Review: Beautiful Desolation	26
The Final Stage.....	27
End Credits.....	27

Loading Screen

This week, I'm writing about one of my favorite game genres, the point-and-click adventure (and similar adventure game genres that carry on the spirit of P&C even if they don't use a pointer-driven interface). I'm not ranking them. I'm not assigning scores. I'm not even putting them in order, except by way of a few groupings that aren't even strictly chronological.



Indiana Mike and the Island of Monkeys. Sorry. That's all I've got.

These are mostly games I played myself, although I'm writing a little about others in the genre too, and about the genre in general. My mini-reviews this week are a few of the games mentioned in the main feature. Before all that, news from the recent 9/12 Nintendo Direct is in this week's Recent Events.

Recent Events

Metroid Prime 4 Releases on December 4th

I would be happy if it released even later in December, because that would give me a couple more weeks to catch up on all the games I'll be behind on, and it would line up with my annual two weeks of vacation time at the end of the year.

When I listed it as one of my most anticipated games of 2025 in [issue #17](#), I was hopeful it would still be out this year, but I couldn't be certain. For me, this is a "drop everything" kind of release. I just hope it's not a mess on the original Switch, because the whole "Key Cards" scam (even if Nintendo hasn't been doing that themselves) has convinced me I'm OK waiting to get a Switch 2, or maybe not even getting it at all.

Oddly enough, the announcement was dropped at the end of a trailer for the Switch 2 version, about two-thirds of the way through the presentation, with no commentary about it from the hosts at Nintendo or anything.

I don't know how I feel about Samus on a motorcycle, or what that implies about the world design and the gameplay. That was unexpected.

The Super Mario Galaxy Movie

As part of their Mario 40th Anniversary, legendary industry icon and creator Shigeru Miyamoto announced that the upcoming *Super Mario Bros.* movie is titled *The Super Mario Galaxy Movie*.

In addition, *Super Mario Galaxy* (the game) is being reissued after it appeared on the Switch previously in the limited-time *Super Mario 3D All-Stars* (I bought my physical copy at the time). It's being joined by the sequel, *Super Mario Galaxy 2*, which was conspicuously absent from that *3D All-Stars* release.

DLC Day-and-Date with New Games

At least two new games are getting paid DLC the same day those games launch. This seemed odd to me, and I don't know how I feel about it. Was it content cut just for the sake of being able to charge more for the "complete" game? It just feels wrong.

Fire Emblem: Fortune's Weave

If I had ever played a *Fire Emblem* game, and if I had a Switch 2, I'd probably be pretty hyped for this one, from what I saw in the showcase.



I have all of them (or many of them) in my collection, which includes *Path of Radiance* on GameCube; *Radiant Dawn* for the Wii; *The Sacred Stones* and a game just called *Fire Emblem* on the GameBoy Advance; *Shadow Dragon* for the DS; the 3DS games *Awakening*, *Fates/Birthright*, *Fates/Conquest*, and *Shadows of Valentia*; *Warriors* for 3DS and Switch both; *Three Houses* and *Engage* for Switch; and even one called *Monshou no Nazo* for Super Famicom.

Oh, wait, I did play one pseudo-spinoff, but it was more for the *Shin Megami Tensei* crossover. It was a fun game called *Tokyo Mirage Session #FE* on the WiiU, but it doesn't really count as a *Fire Emblem* game.

Nintendo Classics: Virtual Boy

This too was unexpected. I don't think it's for me (and I don't have the NSO Expansion Pack anyway), but good on Nintendo for doing it.

Capcom Games

Monster Hunter Stories 3 and *Resident Evil 9* (aka *Requiem*) are coming to Switch 2.

Yoshi and the Mysterious Book

Switch 2 owners can also look forward to a new side-scrolling platformer starring Yoshi.

Source: The September 2025 Nintendo Direct
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tWIEv_aksvo

Point and Click and Think and Solve

In the beginning, there were Text Adventures. Entire worlds were described in words, with the illusion that anything was possible simply by typing whatever you wanted to do. [Issue #7](#) of this newsletter is all about that, with a fair bit about the interactive fiction I wrote myself.

```
You are behind the white house. In one corner of the house
there is a window which is slightly ajar.
>open window

With great effort, you open the window far enough to allow passage.
>in

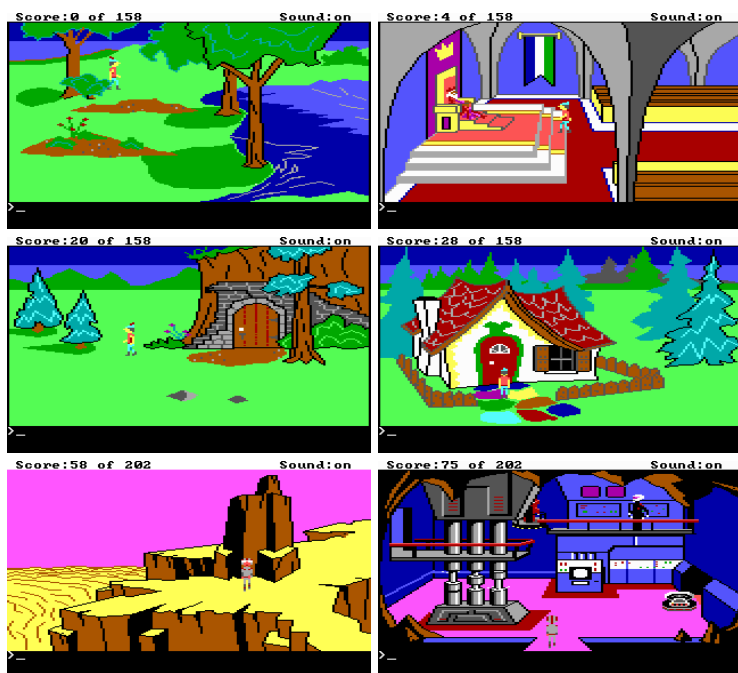
You are in the kitchen of the white house. A table seems to have
been used recently for the preparation of food. A passage leads to
the west, and a dark staircase can be seen leading upward. To the
east is a small window which is open.
On the table is an elongated brown sack, smelling of hot peppers.
A clear glass bottle is here.
The glass bottle contains:
    A quantity of water.
>get all

brown sack:
Taken.
glass bottle:
Taken.
>u

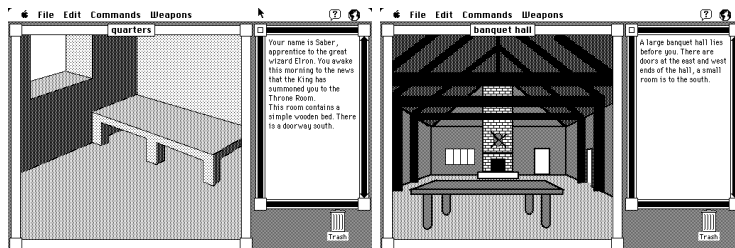
It is pitch dark. You are likely to be eaten by a grue.
Zork
```

Next came Graphic Adventures. As computers became more powerful (relatively speaking) and the gaming market became more interested in graphics, it made sense to introduce illustrations and animations to what had previously been an all-text format. These games still made use of a text command prompt, but much of the game text itself was replaced with visuals.

The first of the *King's Quest* and *Space Quest* games from Sierra were Graphic Adventures.



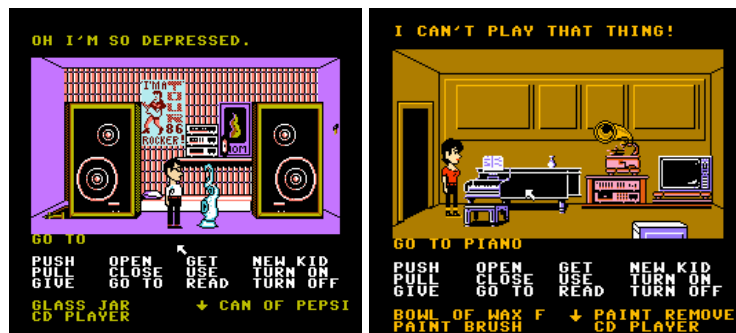
Once the Apple Macintosh made the mouse-driven window-based graphical UI “a thing”, it opened the door for the next evolution of these kinds of puzzle adventure games: the Point-and-Click Adventure. In fact, from what I’ve been able to find, the first entry in the genre was *Enchanted Scepters* on the Mac, from Silicon Beach Software.



Most notable for the era is, of course, the seminal *Maniac Mansion* from Lucasfilm Games (as they were called at the time), first released in 1987 with a point-and-click interface that allowed players to click a verb from a list and point to things in the scene to perform an action such as “OPEN” on a door or “PUSH” on a button or “READ” on a book.

The game was released on seemingly every home computer that could support it (Amiga, Commodore 64, Apple II, Atari ST, and DOS for IBM PCs), although it was a staggered rollout over the course of two or three years.

I’m surprised to see it never released for the TRS-80 Color Computer 3, but I guess that just wasn’t a supported Lucasfilm Games SCUMM platform. The market of owners was probably smaller too.



Of all the versions available, it was the 1990 version for NES that I eventually played, in 2014 on Retron5.

Point and Click - Continued

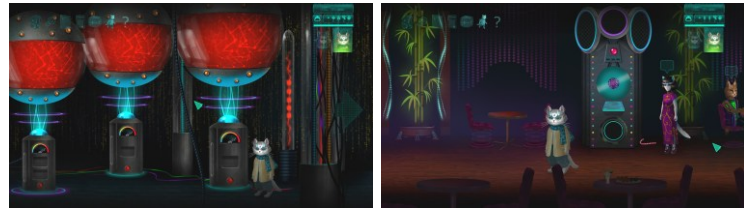
The roots of many other genres can probably be traced back to point-and-click adventures; games with an inventory of items you can use for solving puzzles (like the original *Resident Evil*, for instance). *Myst* and games like it were an evolution as well, replacing complex command and inventory systems with more puzzle-focused exploration and “things” in the environment to interact with.

Later TellTale games focused more on the narrative and choices, although their earlier games were very much point-and-click. Third person adventure games like *State of Mind*, puzzle games like *The Room* and *Return of the Obra Dinn*, escape room games, hidden object games, and even walking sims to an extent have taken the idea of exploring and solving puzzles to create unique experiences.

Point-and-click adventures themselves evolved to streamline the UI with action icons instead of word lists, easy-to-access inventory, and even creative ways to redefine what “point-and-click” means by introducing context-sensitive options instead of a static verb/action list. For instance, many modern games in the genre simplify things so that clicking or hovering over something in the room provides just the command icons that make sense for a particular object.

It’s rare, though, to find a modern point-and-click adventure that hasn’t been reworked to such an extent that it no longer captures the spirit (and difficulty) of those earlier games. Whether it’s built-in hint systems, overly simplified command systems, or less complex puzzles that no longer require finding six different things in six different locations to combine into some weird gadget you need to remove chewing gum from under a table, I’ve found that they seem to be much easier now.

My guess is that I’m missing out on many great point-and-click adventures on PC, since I do most of my gaming on consoles. I did recently play a game called *Cat’s Request* on PS5, and my mini-review is in the VGGN’s [first issue](#). It’s a bit forgettable in hindsight and fits with what I said about newer games being simplified.



In the interest of getting to the spirit of these kinds of games, I’m going to stretch the definition of “point-and-click adventure” to include a few games that, strictly speaking, aren’t played by moving a pointer around and clicking on anything in the scene, as if from a first-person perspective. That means I’ll be including a few early graphic adventures that used a command prompt, and later games that ditched the first-person perspective by adding a character you control directly and gameplay mechanics that involve walking near things to interact with them.

To me, these are essentially the same, and I’m not planning future features that cover each distinct play style separately. At their core, these are games with multiple rooms or locations to travel between (usually), an inventory system where you can collect and combine items (usually), and puzzles that require using things from your inventory or manipulating the things around you.

They also tend to feature a strong narrative, or at least some sort of story that serves as the motivation for solving their myriad puzzles.

I enjoy puzzle games of all kinds, but there’s just something unique and special about point-and-click adventures, and the way they integrate fun and interesting puzzles into the stories they tell.

They’re at times frustrating when you’re stuck and the solution turns out to be something wild and illogical, and at times brilliant, making you feel as though you’re the smartest person alive to solve them.

Adventures on a Cartridge

A few of the most high-profile early point-and-click adventures made their way to the NES, and there were even a couple exclusives, like *Nightshade* and *Princess Tomato*. It's a little clunky to play them that way, since the D-pad isn't ideal for moving the pointer around, but they work. I'm grouping these with a couple others that were released on GBA and GBC.



Some point-and-click adventures for the Nintendo Entertainment System (NES), from my own collection.



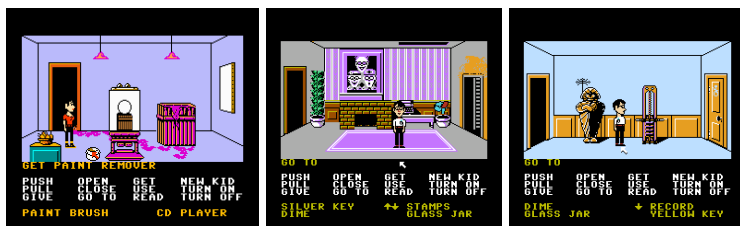
Broken Sword for GameBoy Advance (GBA) and Déjà Vu I & II for GameBoy Color (GBC), from my own collection.

Maniac Mansion

It's a classic, and they somehow managed to make it work on the NES. This is the version I played, with my review on [episode 26](#) of the VGG Podcast, starting at the 34:30 mark.

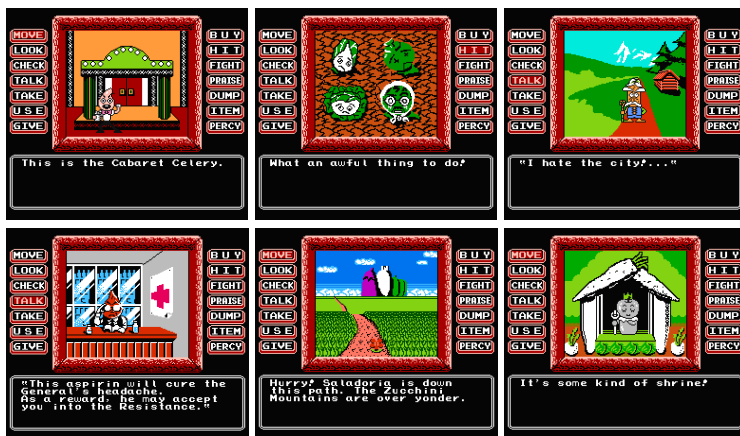
One of the most impressive things about *Maniac Mansion* is that you can switch between three characters you select at the start from a group of six. They have different talents that aid in puzzle-solving, so your team determines your path and options through the mansion's challenges.

The original game was developed by Ron Gilbert and Gary Winnick through Lucasfilm Games, although an uncredited porting team at Lucasfilm Games did the NES version.



Princess Tomato in the Salad Kingdom

I never got around to *Princess Tomato*, but it's on my backlog. Maybe I'll prioritize it soon.

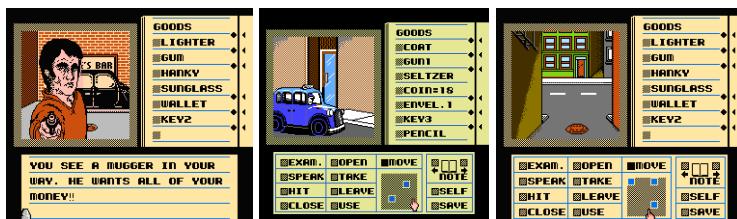


King's Quest V

I *might* have played this on PC, but I'm not sure. I think I played several in the series. I for sure haven't played the NES version yet, but maybe I will someday.



Shadowgate



Nightshade: The Claws of Sutekh

I reviewed this on the VGG Podcast back on [episode 26](#), starting at the 29:44 mark. I liked some things about it, but I remember it having too many red herrings and obscure puzzle solutions, which forced me into using a walkthrough quite a bit to make it through.

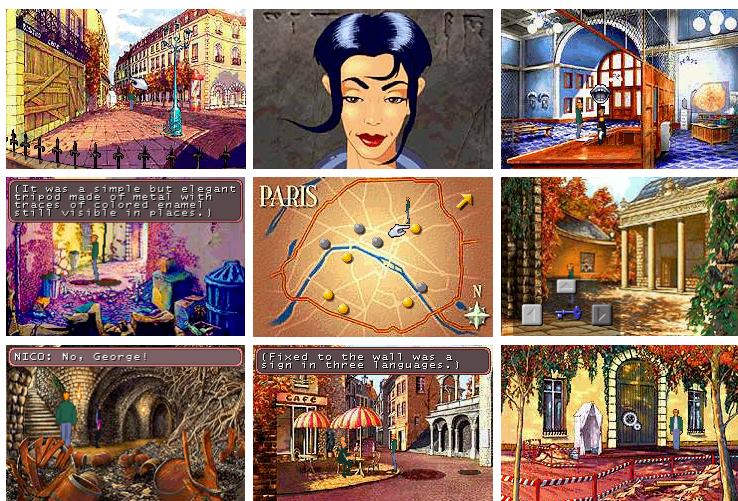
It had a Saturday morning cartoon vibe to it, with bad guys often calling Nightshade by goofy alternate names (Lampshade, Nightsoil, and so on) and the bad guys being part of a League of Unreasonable Gentlemen.



Broken Sword: The Shadow of the Templars

Although any other version of this game is probably superior to the highly compressed visuals of the Gameboy Advance version, it is indeed the GBA version that I played.

Broken Sword was already using the more modern adventure game system of allowing free character movement, with hotspots only showing up when in proximity to them. Rather than moving a pointer around the screen to click on anything and everything, you simply walk close to something (like a door), and when facing it, a context-sensitive icon pops up to allow talking, examining, and so forth.



DOS and Windows Classics

These days, point-and-click adventures are more of a novelty for a niche market than they were back in the 1980s and 1990s. Most of the ones I played early on were from Sierra Online, and that was because a friend of mine owned them. I did play one from Lucasfilm Games (or LucasArts) in the mid 90s (*Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis*), but it was many years later before I played any of the *Monkey Island* games, *Grim Fandango*, *Maniac Mansion*, or *Day of the Tentacle*. To this day, I still haven't played *Full Throttle*. I really should.

Leisure Suit Larry

Technically, these were graphic adventures, except for the VGA remake of *Larry 1*, meaning they used a simple text parser rather than a point and click interface. Honestly, I had forgotten that until I started fact-checking what I remembered.

As with all the Sierra Online games, I don't remember which ones I played in the series. Looking at a list of them all now, I think I only played the first three:

Leisure Suit Larry in the Land of the Lounge Lizards

Leisure Suit Larry Goes Looking for Love (in Several Wrong Places)

Leisure Suit Larry III: Passionate Patti in Pursuit of the Pulsating Pectorals

I also played *Love for Sail* in 2007, but the only thing I know is that I played it on "mobile" and that wasn't even a smartphone version.

Focusing just on those three, I remember having a blast with them, although I wonder how well they would or wouldn't hold up today. They featured "adult themes" and even included an "age verification" system where you had to answer questions that presumably only an adult at the time would know.

They also included "copy protection" in the form of needing to enter specific words from a specific page of the manual. It was easier to copy and share disks than to copy and share the manual back then, I think.



Hero's Quest / King's Quest / Space Quest

Isn't it funny how memory can play tricks on a person? Before I started putting together this feature, I was *sure* these were point-and-click adventures too. Although there were VGA remakes in the early 90s that were (for some of them, at least), it seems like I played the CGA/EGA originals (in other words, lower-res graphics with fewer colors).

Hero's Quest ran afoul of Hasbro's trademark for a board game called *HeroQuest*, so they rebranded and re-released as *Quest for Glory*.

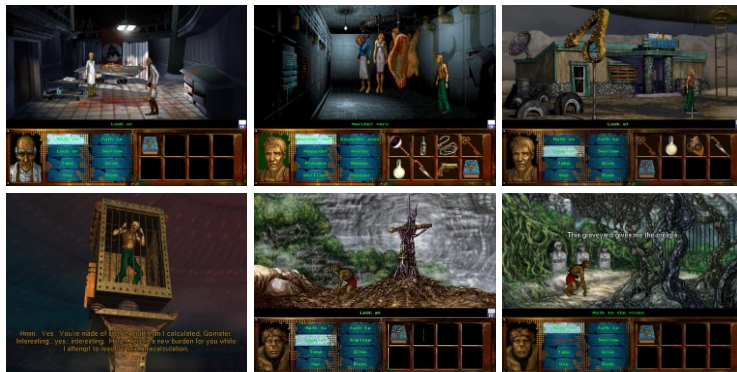


Later releases in each of these three series were point-and-click adventures, but I'm not 100% sure I ever played them. Well, *Quest for Glory* may have been more of an RPG, but I'm counting it because that's what I remember.

I Have No Mouth and I Must Scream

My mini-review of this weird, mature, highly unsettling Harlan Ellison cult classic can be found in VGGN [issue #7](#) on page 21, with a second mention in [issue #14](#) on page 9 in my feature about the weirdest games I've played.

It was first released in 1995, and I played it in 2021 (I bought it on Good Old Games / GOG). If I had waited, and if I could have predicted it would get ported, I could have played it on PS5 when it came to various consoles earlier this year (including Xbox and Switch), thanks to the port powerhouse Nightdive Studios.



Indiana Jones and the Fate of Atlantis

This was probably among the first true point-and-click adventures I ever played, realizing now that many of the Sierra Online games I had played previously were *probably* graphic adventures with a command prompt instead.

I remember loving it at the time, but little else.



Day of the Tentacle

It wasn't until Double Fine (headed up by Tim Schafer, a creative lead for the original game) remade and released *Day of the Tentacle Remastered* (on PS4 and other platforms) that I finally played the excellent follow-up to *Maniac Mansion*. The nerdy Bernard (from *Maniac Mansion*) and his friends Hoagie and Laverne time travel using outdoor toilets. The game is witty, funny, and probably one of the best point-and-click adventures ever made.

Games like this are often better when played together with another person. This one, I played with my ex-girlfriend Tracy (she passed away earlier this year). It helps to have more ideas on solving puzzles, plus, she had played the original and remembered a little of it.

On the VGG Podcast, I talked about this game twice, on consecutive episodes [90](#) (at the 1:03:04 mark) and [91](#) (at the 42:48 mark).

The entire *Maniac Mansion* was even included and fully playable in-game. It didn't get the same remaster treatment, though.



Monkey Island

It took even longer before I finally played the first two *Monkey Island* games (*The Secret of Monkey Island* and then *Monkey Island 2: LeChuck's Revenge*). In fact, it was only a little over two years ago, and they were the *Special Edition* remakes for Xbox 360 from 2009 and 2010, so I was doubly late to the party.

I would include my mini-reviews in this issue, but I already did that back in [issue #7](#) on pages 16 and 17. As with *Day of the Tentacle*, the remakes allowed toggling back to the original graphics and interface, if you were so inclined. I did it frequently out of curiosity, but it only reinforced how much better and more playable the remastered versions were. Still, there's a certain charm to the originals.



I haven't yet played the third game (*Escape from Monkey Island*) or the five-episode TellTale series (*Tales of Monkey Island*) or the more recent one made by original series creator Ron Gilbert (*Return to Monkey Island*), but I did play *Escape from Monkey Island* (the fourth game) on PS2 of all places, with my ex-wife back in the 2000s.

Grim Fandango

This one also had a remaster from Double Fine back in 2015, but it was the original on PC that my ex-wife and I played, back in 2007.

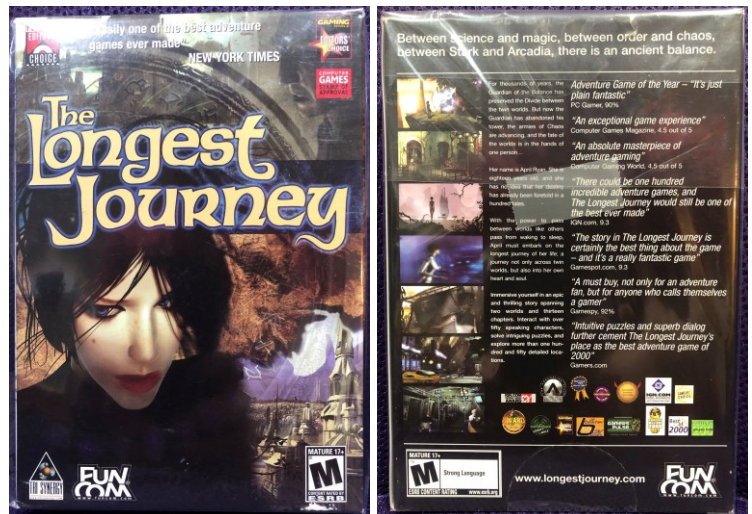


The front and back of the big box are pictured above. The reflection is because it's wrapped in plastic for dust and shelf wear protection in my [collection](#), and no, I wasn't intentionally trying to make a multi-word rhyme out of this sentence, but hopefully there's no objection.



The Longest Journey

We also played and loved *The Longest Journey*, but we did it out of order because we played the sequel *Dreamfall* first, on the original Xbox.



Ragnar Tørnquist and his team at Red Thread Games also made *Dustborn*, an underrated narrative-focused game from last year that sure riled up all the chuds.

Trilogies and Beyond

Next up are four stand-out adventure game trilogies and series that arguably bridge the gap between those early classics and the more modern games of the past ten or so years that continue to keep the genre alive.

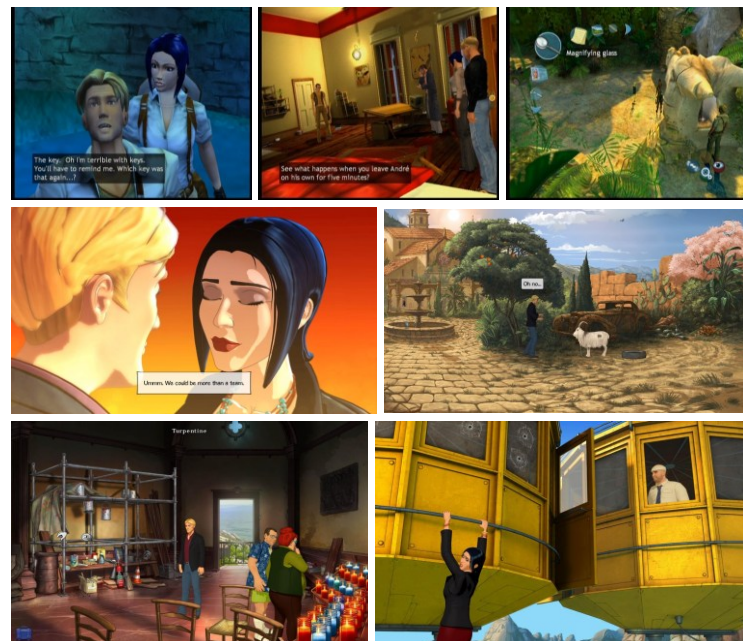
Broken Sword

You may be thinking “wait, wasn’t this already listed earlier?” Yes, I played *The Shadow of the Templars* on Gameboy Advance and mentioned it earlier. It’s only game one in a five-game series that started in 1996 and ended (so far) with *Broken Sword 5: The Serpent’s Curse*, which was originally released in two parts in 2013 and 2014.

There is, however, a [sixth game](#) in the works, but it doesn’t seem to have a release date yet.

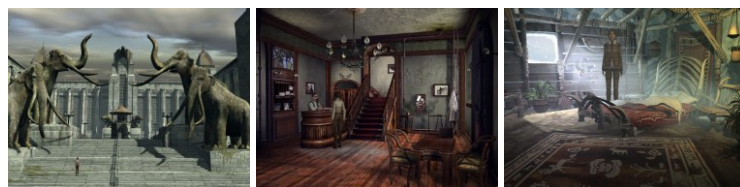
I played the third game (*The Sleeping Dragon*) on the original Xbox with my ex-wife, and I played both parts of the fifth game on the PlayStation Vita in 2014 and 2016. I don’t have any single VGG Podcast review I can link to, since I played them over several weeks and talked about it on several different episodes.

In the series, you play as George Stobbart, an American everyman kind of character who meets French journalist Nico Collard (who is also a playable character in some of the games) and becomes caught up in various conspiracies and adventures.



Syberia

I played the first *Syberia* on Xbox with my ex-wife in late 2006, and the sequel on PS3 much later, in 2017. I remember being a little disappointed by *Syberia II*, but that’s perhaps because the PS3 just wasn’t the ideal version. My review on [episode 151](#) of the VGG Podcast starts at the 32:13 mark.



I’ve yet to play *Syberia III*, or the more recent fourth game, *Syberia: The World Before*.

The Journey Down

Of all the more modern indie point-and-click adventures, these come the closest to hitting the same mark for substance, style, and vibe as those older LucasFilm/LucasArts games.

The trilogy was developed by a Swedish studio called SkyGoblin. The world and characters are Jamaican-inspired, with mask-like faces. The story involves Bwana, Kito, and Lina as they journey to the fabled “Underland”.

I played the first game on iPhone in 2013 but later bought the trilogy on Switch and played parts 2 and 3 in 2020. My mini-reviews for those two appear later in this issue.



Sam & Max

The first game, *Sam & Max Hit the Road*, was a LucasArts point-and-click adventure released in 1993. It's another one that I never owned or played. TellTale Games brought it back starting in 2006 with a six episode series called *Sam & Max Save the World*. Actually no, it was just called *Sam & Max Season 1* at first, only gaining the *Save the World* bit after the remaster was released following Season 2 (*Beyond Time and Space*) or maybe Season 3 (*The Devil's Playhouse*).

The Wii version of the first season is another of the many games I played with my ex-wife. I never got around to the second and third seasons, but they're on my backlog.

The games are funny, with the titular stars Sam (an anthropomorphic dog) and his sidekick Max (a chaotic, unhinged rabbit sort of animal person thing) working as freelance detectives and ending up in wild and bizarre adventures. Max is listed in the "A" tier of my "little guy companions and sidekicks" list in VGGN [issue #16](#), on page 8.



When it comes to TellTale games, there are two distinct periods: BTWD and ATWD. The first one stands for "Before *The Walking Dead*", when they were making point-and-click adventures like *Sam & Max*, *Tales of Monkey Island*, and *Back to the Future*. When they made season one of *The Walking Dead*, though, they ditched most of what makes an adventure game an adventure game and found mainstream success in replacing puzzles and an inventory system with choices, a focus on narrative, and less need to interact with the environment in any sort of challenging way.

That, of course, is the period "After *The Walking Dead*", with licensed property after licensed property getting the TellTale Games treatment.

Modern Miscellaneous

Now that the big-name games and various classics have been covered (at least the ones I played myself; I know there are plenty of notable adventure games I'm missing, but it's because I never played them), here are some more recent and lesser-known games. Well, not all of them are lesser known. I guess this group is more of a catch-all for everything that didn't make sense to include in an earlier set.

Broken Age

Double Fine's high profile Kickstarter success ushered in a wave of crowdfunding popularity when it brought in around \$3.3 million from thousands of people (like me) who were eager to see Tim Schafer's team make a modern point-and-click adventure way back in 2012.

If you haven't watched the Kickstarter pitch video or the 20-part documentary about the making of *Broken Age*, you absolutely should. It's all free on YouTube [here](#). After that, you should also watch *PsychOdyssey*, the 33-part documentary chronicling the development of Double Fine's *Psychonauts 2* (not a point-and-click adventure), which is on YouTube [here](#).



The game turned out great. It managed to capture the essence of the classics (including those LucasArts games Tim Schafer himself worked on), while avoiding obtuse, illogical puzzles and other legacy nuisances that people often criticize the genre for. I enjoyed it, and I think each one of my three kids played and enjoyed it as well. It's a modern classic.

Thimbleweed Park

Scratch what I said earlier about *The Journey Down* coming the closest to the style and vibe of the classic LucasArts games. When it comes to look and feel, *Thimbleweed Park* from 2017 probably takes top prize.

It isn't just an homage, either. The game was made by Terrible Toybox, Ron Gilbert's studio, and Ron Gilbert was behind *Monkey Island 1* and 2, *Zak McKracken*, and *Maniac Mansion*.

My lengthy review of this modern classic can be heard at the 43:53 mark on the VGG Podcast [episode 158](#), which was incidentally the last episode I ever recorded.



Lost Horizon

I played the first game on PC starting in 2012. I wasn't really set up for PC gaming, though (and I'm still not), so I'd have to make time to play at my desk between other games, and it was a process that I managed to drag out for nearly three years, playing off and on until I finally finished the game in 2015. I included my long-form review on [episode 48](#) of the VGG podcast, starting at the 36:20 mark.

I played the long-awaited sequel in early 2021 on Switch and was ultimately disappointed in not enjoying it as much as the first game due to various issues. My mini-review for that one appears later in this issue.

The stories involve world travel and are set before World War II. It's a bit like a knock-off *Indiana Jones*, but that probably sells it short.

Dead Synchronicity: Tomorrow Comes Today

My review of this one can be heard on the same episode of the VGG Podcast where I talked about *Thimbleweed Park*; [episode 158](#) at the 37:40 mark. The game is set in a near-future dystopia, after a recent worldwide catastrophe that left a strange anomaly in the sky and destroyed most electronics.

The game ends on an unresolved cliffhanger, with the chance of a sequel being unlikely.



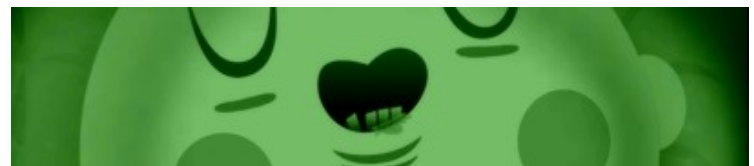
Back to the Future: The Game (TellTale)

When I played this, I never quite understood how the story, non-canon though it might be, fit into the movie timeline. Looking it up now (and maybe I did know this at the time, but forgot), it's set about six months after the end of *Back to the Future III* but has Marty McFly once again crossing paths with Doc Brown; only this time, a much younger Emmet Brown in the Hill Valley of 1931.



Bulb Boy

I played this weird but interesting one on the Nintendo Switch and reviewed it in 2017 on the VGG Podcast [episode 154](#), starting at the 39:46 mark. According to the game's Steam page, a sequel called *Jar of Despair* is due out next month, on October 23rd.



The Darkside Detective

Another cool one on Nintendo Switch (plus most other platforms) is this retro-styled episodic adventure from developer Spooky Doorway. Colors and contrast do the heavy lifting in the game's aesthetic, which uses big blocky pixels that in some ways make it even less detailed than the classics that seem to have inspired it.



When I played it back in July of 2018, I didn't realize it was a work in progress. The final two episodes (cases 8 and 9) were added to the game as free DLC the following month. Since I only realized that later and haven't gone back, I guess technically I haven't finished this one.

At the time, I posted this capsule review:

"A clever cross between X-Files & Maniac Mansion. Point-and-click adventure across several short episodes (plus a bonus one). Fair puzzles a bit on the easy side. Don't let the big-pixel retro look deter you. Great, funny, fun game."

The sequel, *A Fumble in the Dark*, remains on my endless backlog.

Twelve Minutes

Never let it be said that I "glaze" (as the kids say) every game I play, or that I like every game no matter how bad other people think it is (true most of the time). This one plays from an overhead perspective and has a story twist that creeped people out, but it was a fundamental confusion with a key puzzle that soured me on the game. I should have loved it, with its time loop mystery and the voice talents of James McAvoy, Daisy Ridley and Willem Dafoe, but I'll just let my mini-review say the rest (later in this issue).

Machinarium

I might have played a game in the *Samorost* series from Amanita Design (maybe the original Flash-based one), but I definitely played *Machinarium* on PlayStation Vita. Their games have a unique hand-drawn look that (for me) is always instantly recognizable.

Without spoken dialogue or even any text, this game about a little robot (who survives being thrown into a junk pile but returns to save his kidnapped girlfriend) uses pictures and icons to convey messages and requests from the various other robots met along the way. It's really good, and I highly enjoyed it.



Football Game

My mini-review from 2021 appears on page 21 of [issue #10](#) of the VGN.

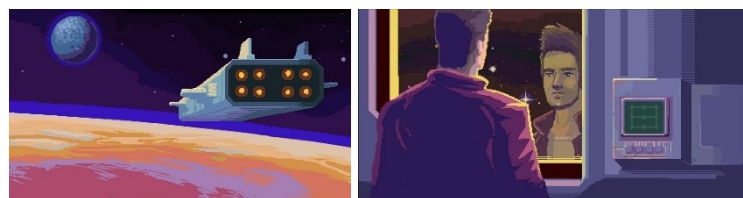
Cat's Request

Sorry for rushing through the last couple of mentions, but my mini-review of this more recent point-and-click adventure appears on page 5 of [issue #1](#) of the VGN.

Tardy

This stand-alone sci-fi adventure is definitely a point-and-click adventure, but it's not a traditional one. Instead of giving you a magical bottomless "inventory" to store and access all the things you pick up, they simply remain on the screen and must be moved around and manipulated directly. It's tough to explain without seeing it in action.

I played it on Switch, but it seems to be available for PC and other consoles as well. My mini-review of the game will appear later in this issue.



Violett

I had this to say about *Violett* on Switch back in 2018 in my one-tweet capsule review:

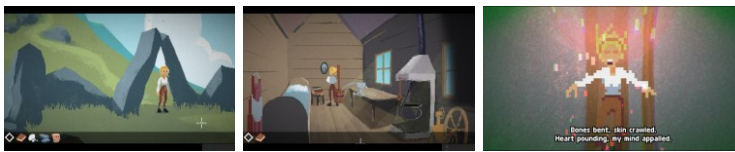
“A fantasy point-and-click adventure. Challenging puzzles, but some in-game assistance helps (a hint system and hot spot reveal button). A beautiful world made up of several puzzle scenes/scenarios. Dialogue is pictures+gibberish. I enjoyed it.”

It's an isekai-like story about a girl who finds her way to a weird and magical world.

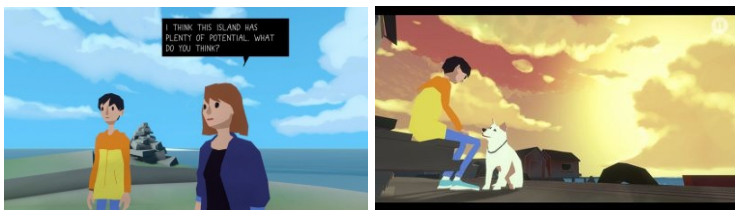


Milkmaid of the Milky Way

Thank the stars for offbeat, inventive indie games like *Milkmaid of the Milky Way*, from MachineBoy, a Norwegian solo developer named Mattis Folkestad. I don't get a chance to recommend this game often enough.



His follow-up, *Embracelet* (not a sequel and entirely unrelated to *Milkmaid*), is great too, but it switches from retro-inspired pixel art to a more 3D low-poly look, and it loses most of the traditional point-and-click mechanics for a more simplified “use this thing” mechanic.



My reviews for both games appear later in this issue. I played them both on Switch, but they're also on PC (as almost every point-and-click adventure is) and mobile devices.

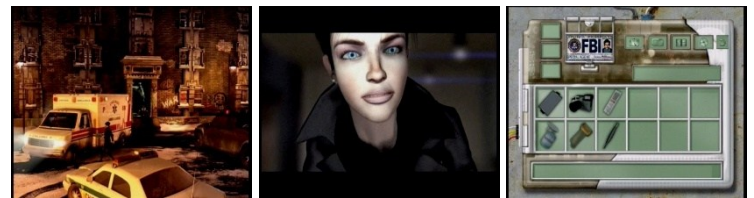
His next game, *Cascadou*, was recently announced and is described as a “satisfying solitaire roguelike where you find and create cascading, exploding poker hands” on its [Steam page](#).

Still Life

My ex-wife and I played this on the original Xbox sometime between when it released in 2005 and when we separated in 2011, but my ever-growing “game log” (explained on page 3 of [issue #12](#), but it's kind of self-explanatory) lists it in a block of games I played before actually keeping track, meaning it must have been in the game's first year, before May 2006.

It's a crime thriller starring an FBI agent named Victoria McPherson. This was probably one of my ex's favorites among all the games we played together. We were looking forward to the sequel but never got to it. I bought a physical copy of it for PC at some point, but physical PC games are a tricky thing. My laptop doesn't have a CD-ROM drive, and even if it did, I don't know if the game would run on Windows 11. A Google search says my biggest hurdle would be the StarForce DRM that Microsoft no longer supports.

In looking it up on Steam, it turns out I own it there as well. Maybe someday I'll get to it.



Adventures on the Nintendo DS

Since my memory of these games is a little foggy, I don't have too much to say except that the DS and 3DS would seem to be the perfect console for point-and-click adventures except for that small screen (better on XL models, but I'd need to wear my glasses these days if I ever went back to them).

Some of these may stretch the definition, but I had fun playing *Hotel Dusk: Room 215*, *Trace Memory* (aka *Another Code*), *Time Hollow*, *999: Nine Hours, Nine Persons, Nine Doors* (a precursor to the *Zero Escape* series, but more puzzle visual novel than point-and-click), and *Jake Hunter: Detective Chronicles*.

Her Majesty's SPIFFING

This slapstick comedic adventure would probably have been way funnier if I lived in the UK or at least understood some of the many pop culture references. My mini-review is included near the end of this issue.

The game's subtitle is *The Empire Staggers Back* and the cover art is a clear *Star Wars* parody, but that seems to be as far as it takes the joke. The rest of the game takes a more original approach, with the Queen taking over to create a space program and send two somewhat unqualified would-be astronauts into space on some sort of mission.



Beautiful Desolation

I'm *really* stretching the definition of what a point-and-click adventure is with this last one, but I feel like it deserves a mention. It plays from an isometric view and looks like it should be a CRPG along the lines of the original two *Fallout* games or the *Wasteland* sequels, but it isn't. It's purely an adventure game with puzzles and interesting characters and several important decision points.



My mini-review for this one is also included later in this issue, along with a few more blurry screenshots taken from my phone's camera before I was capturing them in-game the right way.

=====

That wraps up my nostalgic trip through the point-and-click adventures that shaped my admiration for the genre, but I want to mention a few games (maybe more than a few) I haven't yet played (but want to).

An Overwhelming Backlog

Let's start with the point-and-click adventures that I definitely, absolutely, positively will play (as soon as I'm in the mood for one and have a gap between other games I've already decided to play first). Writing about so many of the ones I *did* play has given me the urge, though, and these are at the top of my list.

Return to Monkey Island

Original creator Ron Gilbert brought his vision for the misadventures of would-be pirate Guybrush Threepwood back in 2022, and it's at the very top of my list. I'm not sure *why* I haven't played it yet, to be honest.

I also plan to play *The Curse of Monkey Island* (the third game) and *Tales of Monkey Island* (the TellTale series), which would complete my entire *Monkey Island* playthrough.

Syberia 3

I think my slight disappointment with the performance of the PS3 version of *Syberia 2* may be what bumped the third game down from a "must-play" to an "eventually-play", but I'm starting to miss the adventures of Kate Walker and a world where automatons exist.

The fourth game, *Syberia: The World Before* is in my library and on my radar too.

Full Throttle

Sometimes I wonder if I haven't played this just from stubbornness. I girl I knew back in the mid 90's was a big fan of this game, and I watched her play some of it, but with the Double Fine remaster sitting there in my digital library for several years, I don't have much of an excuse for avoiding it. I don't think it's even a very long game.



Dreamfall Chapters

I was a Kickstarter backer, and I loved both *Dreamfall* and *The Longest Journey*, so why haven't I played it yet? I vaguely remember one of the VGG Podcast's long-time listeners writing in to say he was a bit disappointed by the game, and I think it's more of a third person adventure than a point-and-click, so maybe that killed a little of my hype for it.

Still, I'm including it in the must-play section of this list. Maybe I'll get to it sometime soon.

Neon Hearts City

I don't want to put everything in my must-play section, but I bought this game [on Steam](#) when it was discounted at launch earlier this year. It's ordinarily a very reasonable \$10. It's from another solo developer, and that's something I appreciate, having been a solo indie game developer myself in a former life.



If the first set was my "must play" list, then this is probably my "should play" list. These are games I've had my eye on for a long time and even own already, but I just haven't gotten around to them yet either.

Sam & Max Seasons 2 and 3

TellTale did well with the first season, and I'm always game to think and laugh. I have the PS4 version of Season 2 (*Beyond Time and Space*), but I've been waiting for a sale on Season 3 (*The Devil's Playhouse*).

Princess Tomato in the Salad Kingdom

A bit of a tangent here, but my NES setup consists of a Retron5 and an 8BitDo receiver so I can use a DualShock 4 with it. It's still hooked up and ready to go. I have the game cartridge already (good, because it's a bit pricey on eBay these days). All I need now is the spark of motivation to give it a go.

Edna & Harvey

My oldest daughter played the second of these two games, *Harvey's New Eyes*, back in 2014 on PS4. She really enjoyed it. I guess it's a dark comedy, but she was probably drawn to the cartoony visuals and the puzzles, the same way she enjoyed *Day of the Tentacle*.

I don't think she ever played the first game (subtitled *The Breakout*), but I have it too, and both are on my "I really should play these" list.

Deponia (Series)

I own them all digitally on Nintendo Switch. I'm sure I'll enjoy them when I finally make time to play. Fun fact, though, I own the PS4 versions of them all digitally too, except for the third one, which was delisted by Sony over some sort of questionable content it contains, apparently involving what they deemed to be a racist portrayal of a certain character.

Digging a little deeper, there seems to be a few other questionable or insensitive jokes or character portrayed in the series, but since I haven't played it myself, it's hard to know if these are serious issues or just nit-picking.

The games in this series are:

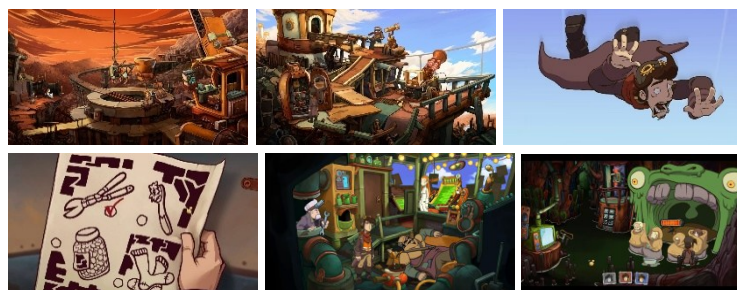
Deponia

Chaos on Deponia

Goodbye Deponia

Deponia Doomsday

A fifth game called *Surviving Deponia* is apparently in the works, but it appears to be an isometric survival strategy game instead of a point-and-click adventure. That's not really a genre I enjoy, but I'm sure it'll have its fans.



The Inner World

The series consists of only two games (*The Inner World* and *The Last Wind Monk*), and I have them both digitally for PlayStation 4. I've always been keen to give them a go, but just never have. They look interesting, and fun.

Randal's Monday

I don't know if this game is supposed to be good or not, but Tracy (who I've mentioned before) played it and enjoyed it. Characters are voiced by Jeff Anderson and Jason Mewes (from Kevin Smith's *Clerks*), and "Randal" is even the name of Jeff's character in the movie. I don't think it's an official license or tie-in; more of an "inspired by *Clerks* but not licensed, so we're just going to use as much of it as we can get away with" kind of thing.



Norco

I've heard this is really good, but I know very little about it. It's described as a point-and-click adventure, but I don't know if the term is used loosely, or if it really fits the definition.

The Case of the Golden Idol

I bought this on a sale for PS5 a while back. It's supposed to be really good. I've been waiting for a big discount before buying the sequel (*The Rise of the Golden Idol*), but since I haven't played the first game, I'm not in a big rush. Are these point-and-click adventures? They're *some* sort of adventures. Either way, I want to play them once I finally find the time.

=====

I'm running out of steam at this point, so I'm just going to rattle off a bunch of other games in the point-and-click genre that I'd like to play at some point, someday soon, or eventually.

Still Life 2

Because I remember the first one being really good.

Police Quest (any of them)

I was always more interested in King's and Space.

Broken Sword 2 and 4

These are the two in the series that I never played.

Irony Curtain: From Matryoshka with Love

Cartoony graphics, cold war satire, and puzzles.

The Book of Unwritten Tales 2

This always looked interesting to me.

Blazing Dragons

It's lost to time on Sega Saturn and PlayStation 1. I do have the PS1 version. Very slow loading is a problem.

The Whispered World

It looks interesting, and the art style is pretty cool.

Silence

It's a sequel or follow-up to *The Whispered World*.

Zak McKracken and the Alien Mindbenders

Another Lucasfilm Games classic that I never played.

Delirium

It's on [Steam](#) for 85% off right now. I have it on PS5.

True Fear: Forsaken Souls

Parts 1 and 2 are on PS5, but Part 3 is still pending.

True Virus

Creepy, disturbing, and with a hand-drawn art style.

Clock Tower: Rewind

I never knew this was a point-and-click adventure.

Leisure Suit Larry Duology

These are the two more recent ones, *Wet Dreams Don't Dry* and *Wet Dreams Dry Twice*. Don't judge me.

Indiana Jones and the Last Crusade

It has never been ported, but it's on Steam and GOG.

Secret Files (4-game series)

I have them all on Switch. I'll play them someday.

The Darkside Detective: A Fumble in the Dark

The first game was great. This is the follow-up sequel.

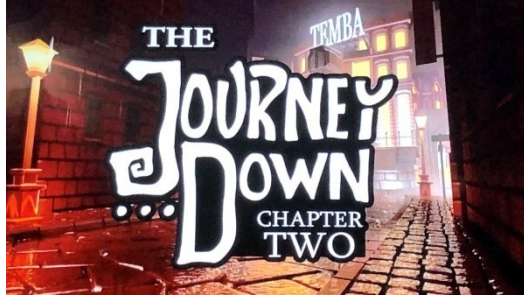
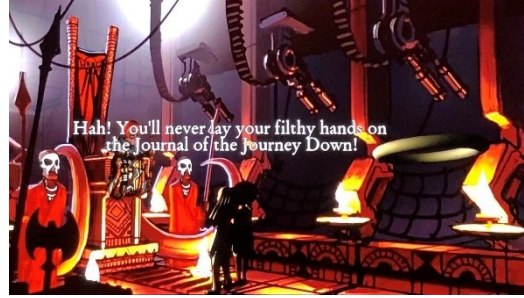
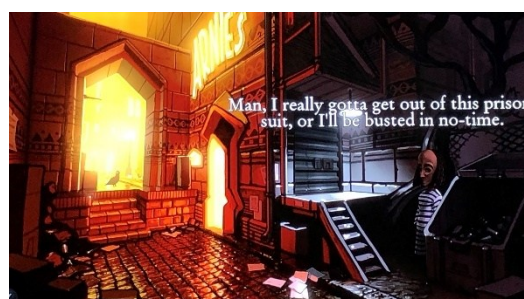
Beneath a Steel Sky

This, and also *Beyond a Steel Sky* at some point.

Blade Runner Enhanced

Another Nightdive Studios remaster I'd like to play.

Mini-Rev: The Journey Down – Chapter 2



I bought the trilogy on Switch after playing Chapter 1 on iPhone many years ago. It's a point-and-click adventure with mostly simple puzzles, fully voiced, and a unique character art style where their faces look like tribal masks.

You play as Bwana in a Jamaican-inspired world, searching for his missing adoptive father. Chapter 2 takes you to a new city of adventure, with inventory items to find/use and new characters to help or otherwise deal with.

I did get stuck, just once, on something I had solved too soon involving a radio, but otherwise the story moved ahead at a good pace.

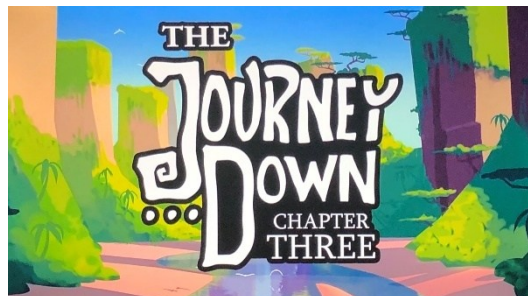
It seemed a bit shorter than the first game, but I don't know for sure.

Nothing besides the setting itself (not the story or any particular puzzle) stood out as remarkable.

Still, it's a good game.

Played on console: Switch.
Originally posted: 05/20/2020.

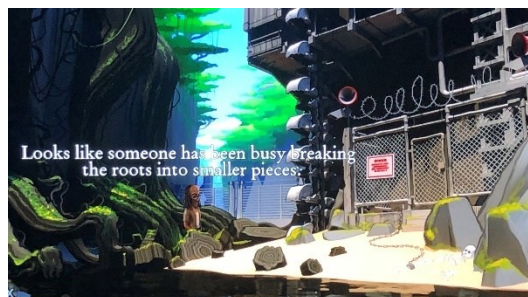
Mini-Rev: The Journey Down – Chapter 3



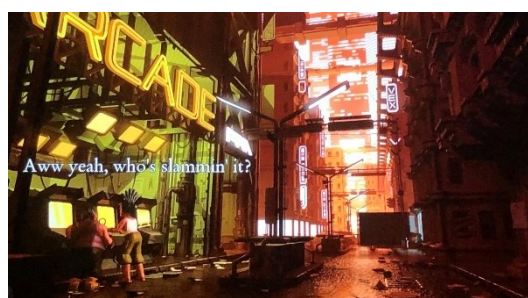
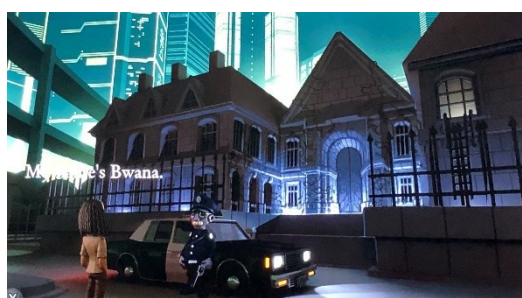
The last episode in this point-and-click adventure trilogy wraps up the story of Bwana, Kito and Lina in a satisfying way.



Despite quite a few new characters and locations, it seems to go by fast. This might be due to more streamlined pacing, made possible by puzzles that seemed less complex and easier to solve than the prior chapters. That's not to say it's too short or anything. Taken as a whole, the trilogy feels like a grand adventure.



The music, voice acting and art style are all well done. You even get to play as Lina for a while this time. Not much else to say except that I enjoyed it. It's a fun story.



Played on console: Switch.
Originally posted: 08/22/2020.

Mini-Review: Lost Horizon 2



Sequel to a point-and-click adventure I enjoyed on PC several years ago, *LH2* is sort of a letdown. The ending bit is pretty cool, and the globetrotting adventure features some interesting locations, but it feels a bit low-budget (not a big surprise, though, since it's a niche game genre now).

Voice acting quality varies. Voice volume, too, is all over the place; sometimes quiet, sometimes extra loud.

It's a traditional P&C, so lots of inventory, combining stuff in weird ways to solve puzzles, some red herrings.

There's a built-in walkthrough, which helped a couple times when I got stuck (ex: get snow in a helmet, melt it, soak a stick so it would bend to make a bow... never guessed). Not enough useful responses to wrong things you try either, which hurts it. It's OK. Fun, but not great.

*Played on console: Switch.
Originally posted: 02/17/2021.*

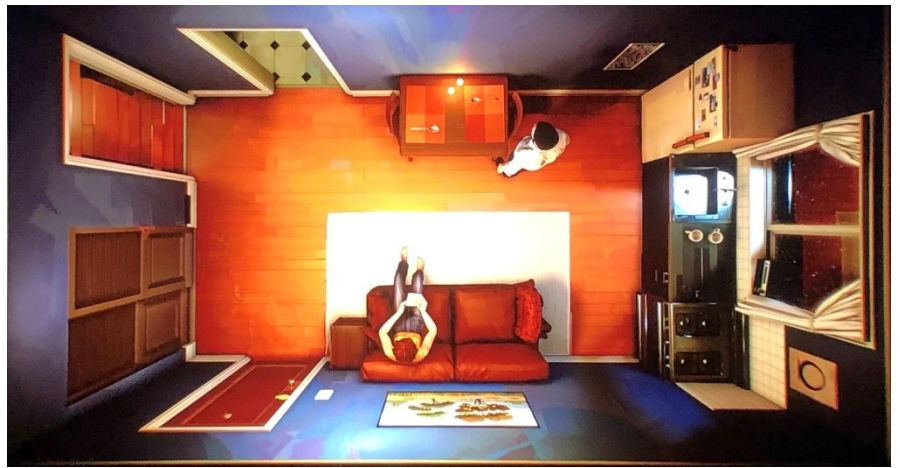
Mini-Review: Twelve Minutes

I kept clear of too much info about this game to avoid spoilers, and as a result, I didn't even know it was a point-and-click adventure. It's a time-looping mystery that works as a sort of puzzle box, where the limited time in each loop lets you make a few discoveries, experiment with ways to change certain events, and maybe eventually figure everything out.

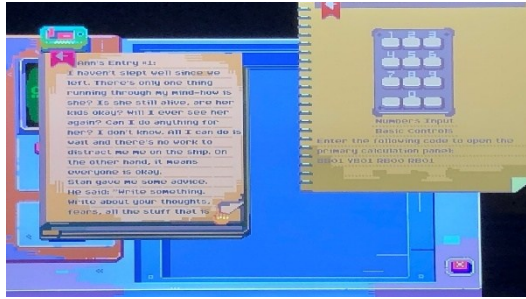
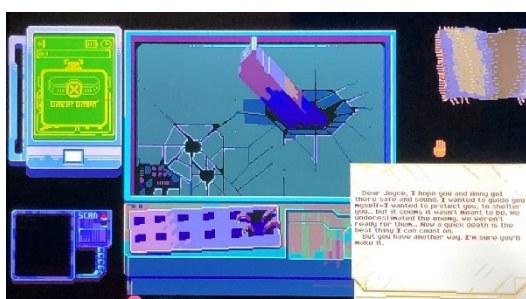
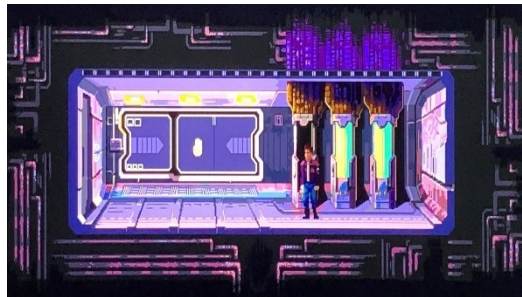
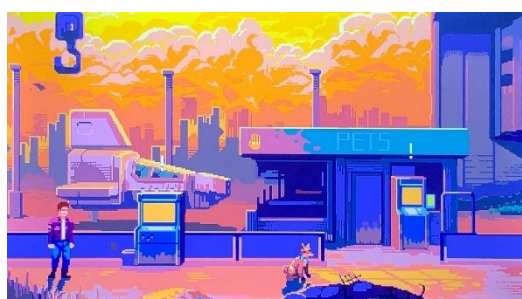
For me, it ended up being a lot harder than I expected, with some frustration in too many wasted loops where I just couldn't figure out what I needed to do next. Eventually I did, but this really hurt the pacing.

Even after pushing past that and reaching the credits, I somehow felt that it didn't fully click for me like I expected. On paper, it's totally my kind of game. I thought it was good; but somehow not great.

Played on console: Xbox Series X with GamePass. Originally posted: 08/21/2021.



Mini-Review: Tardy



Retro-styled sci-fi point-and-click adventure with a novel inventory system where stuff you find can be moved around the screen (not stored away for later).

Puzzles involve logic mini-games more than the traditional “use this thing with that” kind.

The text was probably translated from another language. If so, it’s well done, aside from occasional typos and a spot where it doesn’t fit the computer screen or notepad it’s on.

It’s fairly short (3 to 5 hours, depending on your puzzle-solving), yet there’s a richly developed backstory about a galactic war that sets the stage for the adventure itself. If it intended to tell a poignant story, I feel like it succeeds.

The puzzles are kinda tricky at times, but rewarding. I was also happy that it’s complete; no cliffhanger; not “part 1” of something.

*Played on console: Switch.
Originally posted: 08/11/2020.*

Mini-Review: Milkmaid of the Milky Way



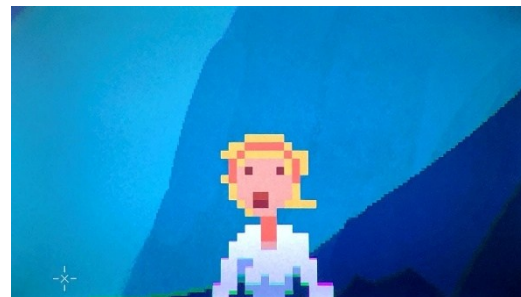
I get too many games on sale, then they sit in my digital library. Not even remembering what they are, I boot them up weeks or months later when I'm bored or between games.



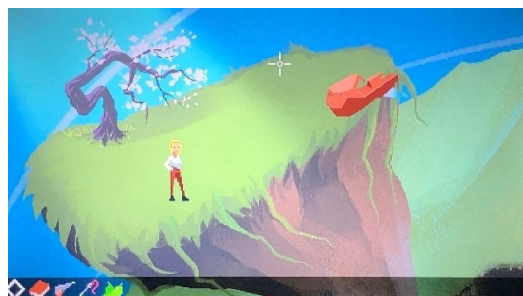
Usually, I bounce and wonder why I wasted my money, but every once in a while I'm surprised and pulled in by something like Milkmaid, a point-and-click adventure by one guy that's playable start to finish in an afternoon.



It's written to rhyme, which occasionally feels forced but usually works well. The puzzles are interesting and generally don't require any outlandish leaps of logic; the right amount of challenge with a couple "notice this small thing" moments, but not pixel-hunt levels of obscurity.



The story is pretty cool too, but I don't want to spoil it here. I really enjoyed it.



Played on console: Switch.
Originally posted: 08/23/2020.

Mini-Review: Embracelet



After I played *Milkmaid of the Milky Way* last year - and loved it - I've had the one-man developer MachineBoy on my radar.

Embracelet released late last year (also on PC and iOS). It's a point-and-click adventure but now in fully 3D environments. Its low-poly, low-texture art manages to avoid the not-enough-details issue I've seen in similarly-styled games. It's colorful and nice.

The puzzles are on the simpler side, with no inventory to manage. Instead, there's a "use" mechanic that's central to both the gameplay and the plot. And man oh man is there a lot of heart put into this game and its story.

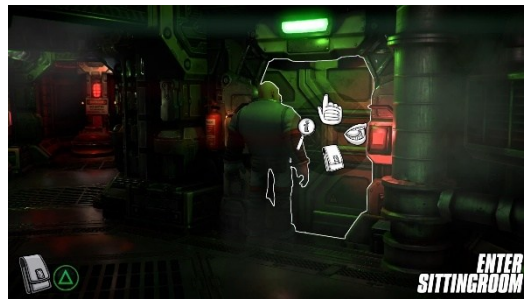
You're 17-year-old Jesper on an adventure that's well worth taking. The trimmed-down puzzle mechanic makes it a good choice even if you're not normally a P&C adventure fan. Highly recommended.

Played on console: Switch.
Originally posted: 02/08/2021.

Mini-Review: Her Majesty's SPIFFING



I finally got around to this game I've had my eye on for years. It's a short (about three hours) comedic modern point-and-click adventure in the vein of *Space Quest*.



The puzzles are mostly simple and logical. I only got stuck once near the end, on a puzzle where I needed to do something before doing another thing, and it never occurred to me to try doing the first thing.



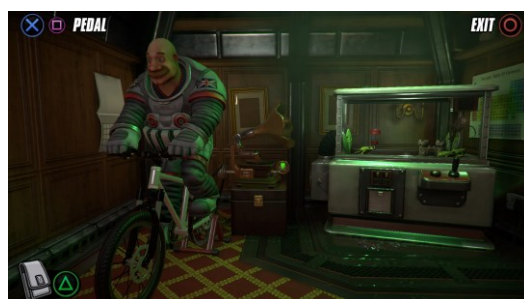
A percentage of progress shows up beside your save files list, which is nice.



It's a funny self-aware game, although much of the humor was lost on me because it's all very British; jokes about Brexit, the queen, BBC 3, tea, and a lot of stuff that just flew right over my head. If you're from England, I bet it's a real hoot though.

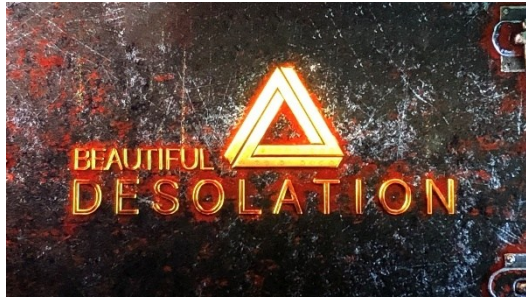


I enjoyed the characters, the voice-over, the silly story and the funny scenario.



Played on console: PS4.
Originally posted: 01/18/2024.

Mini-Review: Beautiful Desolation



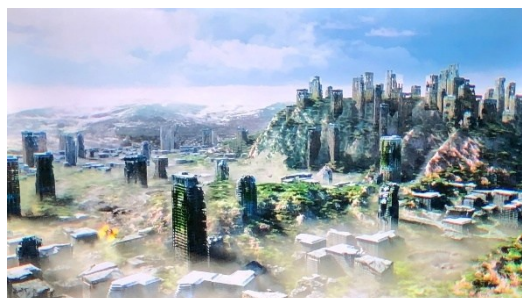
The isometric gameplay on pre-rendered backgrounds had me expecting a strategy RPG along the lines of *Wasteland 3*; but no.



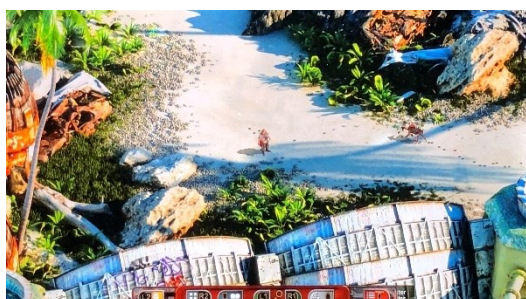
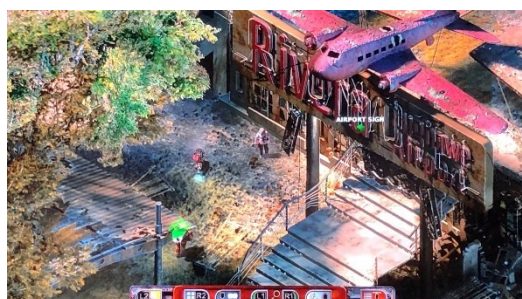
There are a couple turn-based mini-games but by and large this is an adventure game; not quite point-and-click but along those lines, with items to find and use, NPC's to meet, a few puzzles to solve, a world to explore, and a story with mutually-exclusive decision points (ex: help faction A instead of faction B).



I didn't like it at first, but after a few hours in, I was hooked. It needs some quality-of-life improvements when it comes to its menus and objective tracking, and there were times where I struggled to figure out where to go next, but I ended up really liking it.



I guess there's more to the ending with multiple play-throughs, but I'm satisfied with my one.



*Played on console: PS4.
Originally posted: 02/03/2022.*

The Final Stage

Is GameStop Just the Worst?

Everybody makes mistakes. In the age of automation, it's tough to know whether it was a person (putting in the wrong data) or some errant system glitch.

When I cancelled my Best Buy *Hell Is Us* pre-order upon realizing they weren't going to have it ready for several days, I simply ordered it online from GameStop that same day and went to pick it up. At some point I realized the sales tax they charged me was wrong. 7.5% tax on \$59.99 is always a total of \$64.49. It's been that way for years, and I've bought dozens if not hundreds of games, so it's a price I recognize.

When the pending charge showed up as \$66.95, it was an immediate red flag. It turns out, they charged \$6.96 in sales tax, which is a hefty 11.6% of the game's price.

Sure, it's under \$3. I probably should have just let it go, but one of my not so endearing quirks is that I *can't*. What if their system was wrong and they were charging everybody in my area that tax rate? What if there was some sort of fraud involved?

I contacted them by email to get it sorted out. I expected it to be a simple process; maybe a cursory apology with a credit back to my card, maybe the added hoop of going back into the store to get it corrected, maybe just some sort of complimentary \$3 coupon or something.

Instead, they insisted there was nothing they could do, and that if I didn't understand how sales tax works in my area, I should contact the IRS for more information. We went back and forth like this for two days, all because they were defending an overcharge of less than \$3.

I called my credit card to dispute it and was issued a courtesy credit. I would have rather it went through the dispute and chargeback process instead, if for no other reason than to prove a point. I probably sound like a madman, but it's the principle of the matter.

Leisure Suit Larry Reloaded

After backing "Double Fine Adventure" on Kickstarter (the game that became *Broken Age*), I went through a couple years where I was backing several games, specifically so I could get limited backer-only editions of the games. This remake of the first *Larry* was one.



Next Week

My plan is to write about some of the best or most iconic spaceships in video games. See you then!

End Credits

The VGGN controller logo with multiple "X" buttons and some occasional other artwork was made using <https://openart.ai>.

The title font *Closet Dwellers* and the section header font *Shake Your Plums* are licensed from <https://chequered.ink/>.

Images from games mentioned in the Point and Click feature are from those games' pages at <https://mobygames.com>, except for 2 images for *Cat's Request*, 9 images for the GBC version of *Déjà Vu*, 9 images from the GBA version of *Broken Sword*, 8 images from *Monkey Island 1* and 2 Special Editions, and 3 images from *Beautiful Desolation*, which are all screenshots taken by me from those games.

Screenshots for video game mini-reviews and screenshots used in other articles or features that haven't already been credited were captured by me in-game and are used here in what I believe is "fair use".

Images sourced from elsewhere on the internet are credited and/or linked in captions that appear on or below them.

Mini-reviews, articles, rants and general ramblings were written by me. Copyright © 2025 by Mike Snyder.